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SERGEANT HOFF:

AN EPISODE OF THE SEIGE OF PARIS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

PROF. JOHN P. TARRANT.

CONTINUED.

Occasionally, we most acknowledge events did not transpire so smoothly with Hoff. A sentinel would give the alarm, the enemy's picket would be on the alert, and it would be necessary to use his gun.

His sergeant was an excellent marksman but he did not like to waste powder.

"You see," said he to me, "it will not do to be shooting too much. Two or

three hundred yards is a good distance,

at three hundred yards I am sure of my shot. I did better than that once, but

that was an extraordinary case. I was

with my lieutenants in a house at Nogent,

a little on the edge of the Marne. You

can still see the three holes I made in the

roof. Upon the top of the viaduct we

observed a dark object. At the distance

it was, from you, about four hundred

yards, you would have said it was a

monkey's tree. The lieutenant looked

through his glass. "It is a man and an

officer," said he. "There is something for

you to do." I also looked through the

glass and could see him very clearly, a

fine looking fellow, upon my faith, with

sandy whiskers, and wearing a flat cap.

I would know him now if he were alive.

Leaning against the parapet he was tak-

ing notes. I arranged the sights of my

gun for four hundred yards distance, I

took aim, fired, and he fell over the

parapet into the deep path leading from

each side to the viaduct. Very shortly

one of their men came to take him up.

I was watching for this and I fired at

this gun also. He did not fall but the

bullet must have passed very near him,

for he ran away and I saw him no more.

I waited until evening in vain. Nobody

dared approach the body until night.

Besides his casket, of which he made

such good use, Hoff carried about him

afterwards one of those flaubert car-

bins called *parlor-guns*, which make no

noise when fired and which at thirty

paces distance can kill a man provided

you can see his head. It had been sent

him by the chaplain of his regiment as

the gift of some person entirely unknown

to him. A captain of General Expa's

staff had also presented him with a field

glass, of which he made good use in ex-

amining at a distance the position of the

enemy.

Having always first made every prepa-

ration, examining carefully every foot of

his field of operations and having chosen

his route and arranged his plan of at-

tack, Hoff would return for his men.

They generally numbered twelve or fifteen,

such men as Klein, Huguet, Chan-

roy, Barbeix, bold and daring men, well

trained in every kind of drill and never

complaining of their work. In a few

words he would aspin his plans to them,

such a word was to be surprised, then in sin-

gle file and very cautiously the little

troop would take up its line of march.

Accordingly each regiment had its inde-

pendent company regularly organized.

During the night little was said about

these *franc-tireurs* of the line, so much

pride was shown to those who wore

bright uniforms and feathers in the hat,

although they had performed equally as

great and as much real service. In the

morning in accordance with the impor-

tance of the information obtained, Hoff

would always make his report; and when

he made his report great was the com-

motion caused by it among the troops

quartered at Nogent. The *gardes nationales* and *Mobiles* would crowd around

in order to see these daring men, and

what they were soon returning in tags,

covered with mud, black with powder,

looking more like bandits than soldiers,

the least they would gaze at them in as-

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FRIDAY, MAY 11, 1873.

Condition of Winter Wheat.
We gather the following facts in regard to the condition of the wheat crop in the United States from the report of the Agricultural Department for April, 1873:

On the first week of April a considerable portion of the northern belt of the winter-wheat area was covered with snow. The condition of that which was visible gave promise of general exemption from winter injury, leaving the crop subject to the meteorological vicissitudes of April. In the Middle States a great improvement upon the showing of last spring havery where conceded, especially in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The prospect in the State south of Maryland is less favorable than last year, and there are indications of diminishing area in the cotton States, though acreage is not intended to begin in this report. Michigan, the only State of the northern border in which winter-wheat is mainly grown, presents green and vigorous growth, wherever snow has disappeared sufficiently to reveal it; and Ohio makes far more favorable return than last year. In Kentucky a more checked showing is made, during the present appearance a decidedly unfavorable cast, with indications of future improvement as the weather becomes settled. In Indiana and Illinois the unfavorable returns outnumber the rose-colored; the dry autumn retarding seeding and germination, and leaving the plants too weak and shallow rooted to endure well the effects of winter's changes of temperature. Similar causes affect the condition of wheat in Missouri, but a great improvement over last year is reported; and a still more favorable condition exists in Kansas. In Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Nebraska, as is known, very little winter-wheat is produced, but full reports are given of such experiments. The indications from California all point to another year of abundance, scarcely a county reporting unfavorable condition. As a whole the wheat prospect at the close of winter is more favorable than at the same time in 1872.

There are places now in the New England States where a portion of the wheat area of that section is preferentially sown with some hardy winter variety. If the protection of snow is unfailing, the growth of such wheat will be vigorous the present spring, the surface generally having been well covered, or in much of the northern belt from 2 to 6 inches deep.

More than fifty counties in Virginia made reports, nearly all more or less unfavorable.

Nearly three-fourths of the North Carolina reports indicate "backwardness" or "winter-killing." Indications of improvement, under the influence of mild weather, is reported from various quarters.

There is little wheat grown in South Carolina, or in any of the cotton States, except Tennessee and Texas. About half the reports from the former State, as favorable, the others indicating a poor stand and unthrifty condition. Eleven counties in Georgia report condition from average to good, and thirty-two below average. Several report no wheat raised.

In Arkansas unfavorable reports predominate slightly. In more than half the counties of West Virginia there is complaint of injury from frost or unthrifty appearance. The principal injury appears to have been done in March, after the disappearance of the winter's snow. While the surface became bare in places, the temperature was too low for growth, even in counties so far south as Capell.

In most of the counties of Kentucky the appearance is reported unimpressive. In Shelby the "sunny sown" stood best; the counties of West Virginia there is complaint of injury from frost or unthrifty appearance. The principal injury appears to have been done in March, after the disappearance of the winter's snow. While the surface became bare in places, the temperature was too low for growth, even in counties so far south as Capell.

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Fayette County, Kentucky—Wheat has wintered badly; that which was drilled or sown in the fall has done well; all other kinds much injured, probably to an extent of 30 per cent. It has done very well.

In Ohio the returns, which are quite general, are favorable in large proportion of the counties. The crop was well protected by snow in Michigan, (the principal winter-wheat-growing State of the northern border) and scarcely any returns indicate unimpressive condition. A few counties in Indiana report superior condition. In Illinois the reports range between average and bad, very few good. The winter-wheat of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota is scarcely worth mentioning, except to show the possibility of growing it. Iowa reports a very small acre in poor condition. The prospect is better in Missouri than last spring, but still not good. In Kansas a still better prospect is indicated. The reports from California are very unimpressive. There is no positive statement of poor condition. The prospect in Oregon is exceedingly good, not an unfavorable return being received. Several reports state that the indications of a good crop never were greater.

Two Nashville women, a little while ago, announced an intention of being economical and coming calico to church.

At least accounts they had only succeeded in making a dress cost \$19.50, but they are now going to trim them with Valentine's, and do not despair.

Why Kentucky Was Not Paid to the Return of the Gold.
Office of Gov. of Penn. Interior.
FRANKFORT, KY., May 8, 73.

A steady county correspondent, in your issue of May 8, intimated that the school fund is advanced for other purposes—such as to pay members of the Legislature, etc.—and that, therefore, the teachers have to wait until the ordinary revenue taxes have been paid in. This is a mistake and injurious to the Auditor. No such thing has occurred, and if it were possible it would receive the most energetic protest from the Superintendent. The school fund, as collected, is plied to the credit of the Superintendent and disbursed only upon warrants issued by him. No committee, or draft, under any circumstances, remains in this office more than forty-eight hours. It is promptly examined, counterchecked and filed with the Auditor for payment. But to expect him to liquidate them as received without the money is as unreasonable as the exactions of the Egyptian task-master, who demanded a full sole of bricks from the Hebrews without furnishing the material with which to make them. The law allows the sheriffs until the first day of April (and, by adding five per cent, until the fourth Monday in June) to pay the revenue—general and school—into the treasury; while the school law makes the 10th of January the day for disbursing the larger amount due the teachers. This lack of fiscal harmony has produced suspension. When it became apparent that suspension was unavoidable, I addressed a letter to the House of Representatives, apprising it of the condition of the school treasury and the character of claims that had promptly passed my office, and which were held in abeyance by the State Auditor only because of the inability of the treasurer, from lack of funds to liquidate them. I asked that some measure be taken to provide for their immediate payment, and made such appeal, is half of the teachers, as I thought proper to address to the General Assembly. The matter was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, but it should suggest no method of relief.

I believe that it is hardly just to lay the blame of suspension upon the shoulders of innocent and helpless officials.

I suggested the changes in the Revised Statutes, which go into effect next December, changing the time of payment from the 10th day of January, April and July to November 15th, February 15th, May 15th, and July 1st. It is believed that the interest on the State bond, the premium upon bank stock together with such taxes as may be paid by that time, will be sufficient to meet the forty per cent. claim that will mature by the 15th of November. The larger payment being made the 15th of February, more than a month later than now, will probably find the treasury fully up to meet all demands, and so at the two other subsequent payments. The most absolutely certain way to have provided against the possibility of suspension, in any degree, would have been to make the payment of the revenue and of the schools to synchronize.

There is a popular mistake prevalent, namely, that the schools are paid out of a fund that has banked up in the treasury. The fact is that they are paid from the revenue as collected the current academic year.

The most that I can do is to call the Auditor and containing sufficient information of public interest to entitle it to a place in your columns.

H. A. M. HENDERSON,
Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Breaks of Nature.
Allen county has a cat which, in addition to a double spinal column, has two heads, perfectly formed, while its caudal appendage remains single.

The proprietors will spare no pains in making it a first-class newspaper, devoted to the interest of this particular section, and the development of the resources of this and adjoining counties.

James L. Webb of Boyle county, has a mule colt that is a perfect curiosities. It is a large, well formed animal, and is spotted as a leopard, but whether it is a white mule with black spots or black mule with white spots is a question as yet undecided. It is a beautiful thing, and adorns a great deal of curiosities.

Robert B. Southworth, of Harmony, Owen county, has a rare specimen of a double pig, which he has preserved for inspection. It is almost complete, having double head, four ears, double tongue, double set of teeth; the fore legs are natural, two above and two below, which from the ribs back are two distinct bodies.

The Bowling Green Panoprapher tells of a mare belonging to Jas. Willoughby, of Warren county, which gave birth to a mule colt which gives milk like a cow. It has a large head with well developed teeth, and gave nearly a quart of milk the morning after it was foaled. In the afternoon of the same day some friends called to see it, and Mr. Willoughby had it milked for their satisfaction, when it gave another pint. The colt seems to be perfect in all of its parts, and if Mr. Willoughby succeeds in raising it, it will certainly be a curiosities.

The Shelby Sentinel brings to the front something to beat barium: "One of the greatest curiosities that has been seen in these parts for years past, is a genuine (and the only one so far as we know) early mule. The animal was purchased by D. C. Callahan in the wilds of the knobs of this country, and driven through town on court day. It is often hands high, and is well proportioned an animal as one could wish to look at. It is quite as great a curiosity

as Barbadoes' world's wonder, and the only reasonable suspicion we have heard for its peculiar hairy appearance is that it was foaled during Lincoln's administration."

The Clark county Democrat says: "Mr. Jack Ashley has a chicken, recently hatched at his house, which has four perfectly developed legs and three wings. This is so unusual, but a solemn fact. Credit, you'll have to give again."

Now is the Time

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to